

You may follow the day-by-day activities from the time the Mayflower dropped anchor in the "good harbor and pleasant bay . . . circled round . . . wherein a thousand sail of ships may safely ride." Provincetown Harbor never had a better press agent than the Pilgrim scribe of 1620.

Threats of mutiny had disturbed the leaders ever since the Mayflower, blown off her course, turned back from shoals near present-day Chatham and headed into safety at the tip of the Cape. Some of the passengers hinted darkly that once ashore they would do as they pleased, for this Cape Cod landing was unauthorized; the charter called for north Virginia, meaning the mouth of the Hudson.

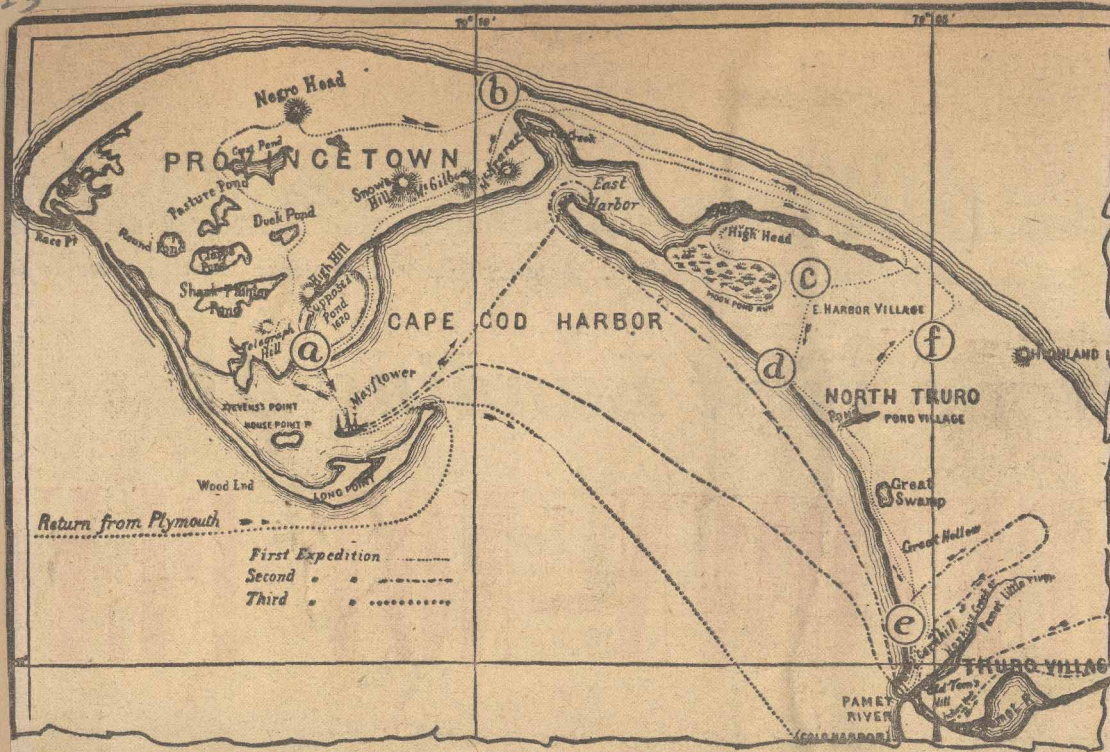
Out of this emergency the Compact was drafted. All the adult men signed it, using the lid of Elder Brewster's chest as a table. It was a simple enough document; they merely agreed to make laws and live up to them. Yet the Compact is hailed as a milestone in world history. For the first time, men had drawn up a charter of democratic government.

A prayer of thanksgiving was the Pilgrims' first thought in America. "Being thus arrived in a good harbor and brought safe to land, they fell on their knees and blessed the God of heaven who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean."

Their next two moves were to get warm and clean.

IT WAS a more forested Cape than we know today, "wooded to the brink of the sea," they wrote home. On the Saturday the Compact was signed, a group of 15 came ashore—the landing place is marked by a bronze tablet near Provincetown's Breakwater. They came "to fetch wood, for we had none left." Juniper was carried back, "which smelled very swete and strong. This we burnt."

The Sabbath was spent aboard ship. Monday, all landed, "our women to wash, as they had great need." Tides have long since swallowed up the fresh water pond near the landing place where Pilgrim mothers beat and scrubbed a nine-weeks' accumulation of clothes and bedding.



This map shows where: A. Pilgrims did washing. B. Saw first Indians. C. Discovered spring. D. Built signal fire. E. Dug up Indian corn. F. Found Indian deer trap.

Two days later began the first of three expeditions to find a place to settle. Step by step these tours may be followed today. You may do it by the armchair method, with the help of a good map. Or climb the 252-foot-high Monument with its easy ramps and resting platforms and get a bird's eye view of the directions the Pilgrims took in scouting the Cape. Better still, use gasoline and see at close hand the actual spots they made famous.

The first trip was entirely afoot, for their small sailboat, a shallop, was being repaired, "and our carpenter made slow work of it." Sixteen men undertook the expedition, promising to stay out no longer than two nights. You visualize them as they start down the beach under command of Capt. Standish, "with every man his musket, sword and corslet"—the 17th century version of a bullet proof vest.

Provisions were back-packed. "We brought neither beer nor water with us. Our only victuals were biscuit and Holland cheese and a little bottle of aqua vitae"—brandy.

In single file they marched, expecting savages at any turn. Sure enough, within a mile appeared five or six Indians and a dog. "But when they saw us they ran into the wood and whistled the Dogge after

them." For ten miles the white men gave chase, but never caught up.

It was a mistake not to carry water. Not until ten next morning was a spring found. "We were sore athirst . . . we sat us downe and drunke our first New England water with as much delight as ever we drunke drinke in all our lives."

A marker commemorates the spring today.

STUDENTS of Pilgrim lore have figured to a nicety the probable location of 20-odd places mentioned in the three expeditions out of Provincetown.

At one spot a signal fire was made "that they in the ship might see where we were."

At one of the several graves discovered the men puzzle over a skull because the hair clinging to it is yellow, not Indian black.

At another point they stop to inspect a bowed-over sapling with acorns heaped below it.

Suddenly William Bradford's leg shoots up into the air with a jerk, caught in a noose hanging from a low branch. It is a deer trap, Stephen Hopkins surmises, "a very pretie device . . . artfully made."

But the biggest find of the first trip was on the Bay side of Truro where the explorers stumbled on heaps of sand recently smoothed down by hu-

man hands. They set their "men sentinels in a round ring," under cover of whom two men inside began to dig. The buried treasure proved to be corn stored in a huge basket—the red man's granary method. Cornhill the Pilgrims named the place, and Corn Hill it still is, with a bronze marker in remembrance.

Our Forefathers not only filled with corn a kettle they picked up along the way, but also stuffed their pockets and on a later trip purloined more to the extent of ten bushels. Much has been said of the casual way in which the Englishmen helped themselves to the Indians' corn crop so painstakingly cached.

"It was God's providence that we found it," they reasoned, for without this seed the colony might have starved. "We purposed to . . . make large satisfaction" to the owners. Records prove they paid it back the next season. New England conscience was off to a good start.

"And thus we came both weary and welcome home"—back to Provincetown.

GOOD news awaited the return of the second group of explorers. William and Susanna White had a baby son. Peregrine White lived to be 84—his descendants are legion today.

The event of his birth made Susanna the first mother to have a white child born in New England; it turned out she would also be the first widow to survive and the first bride among the Pilgrims. Three months after William White died in February, she married Edward Winslow.

Not until the third expedition was there an encounter between redmen and white. The Pilgrims memorized the Indian war whoop to write the folks back home: "Woath! Woach! Ha! Ha! Hach! Woach!" No arrow reached its mark, but one musket shot was well aimed; an Indian gave "an extraordinary cry and away they went all . . . We called this place the first encounter."

Eastham calls it "First Encounter Beach" today, duly memorialized with a tablet.

From Eastham the coast was scouted toward Plymouth, and the final decision of settlement made.

PILGRIM accounts of their life on Cape Cod are far from dull reading. You only wish the scribes had gone into more detail. What, for instance, was the reaction of the Mayflower's skipper when eight-year-old Frankie Billington scattered a keg of gunpowder about the cabin, shot off some firecrackers of his own manufacture, then discharged his father's loaded musket? It started a fire—"By God's mercy no harm was done"—but you suspect the language of that hardy old bosun, Capt. Jones, was even more picturesque than usual.

And how did Dorothy Bradford happen to fall overboard while the Mayflower lay quietly at anchor? Was she despondent, homesick for her only child, five-year Johnny left behind in England? Or did she accidentally lean too far over the rail? Her tragic death remains a 330-year mystery.

They were drama-packed, those five weeks the Pilgrims called the tip of Cape Cod "home." And Provincetown is aware of an obligation to perpetuate the memory of her priceless heritage.

See marker 2 pages over.